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CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial Comment and News Notes	65
Reading for Critical Thinking David H. Russell	79
Recommendations of the California State Curriculum Commission for a Framework for the Social Studies . . Jay D. Conner	87
In-Service Teacher Education Bernice Baxter	96
The Place of Fine Arts in Our Schools Virgil E. Dickson	101
The Obligation of School Administrators to Aid Older Teachers in the Use of Newer Methods and Materials . . . Sister Mary Patricia	107
Taking the Book to the Youngster in Ventura County . Elizabeth H. Topping	114
The Promotion and Placement of Pupils in the Elementary School Lionel De Silva	117
Recommendations of Reed College Conference on Conservation Education in the Elementary School	124

Editorial Comment and News Notes

THE NATION AND ITS CHILDREN

Representatives of organizations interested in programs of education, health, and welfare for children met in Washington, D. C., September 19-21, 1945, to determine policies for which they might stand united, and to outline suggestions for reorganization of federal agencies serving children, for needed legislation, and for action by national organizations. The conference was prompted by the probable termination of child care services under the Lanham Act and the consequent immediate need for long-term co-operative planning for children and youth.

At the conclusion of the sessions a representative group presented in person to President Truman a summary of the findings of the conference. Those organizations endorsing the findings and pledging active support were the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, the American Association of University Women, the American Home Economics Association, the Association for Childhood Education, the Child Welfare League of America, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Association of Nursery Education, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Education Association.

Following are the reports of the conference in the four areas studied.

POLICIES

The future of the United States of America rests with its children. They are at once its greatest resource and its greatest responsibility. The extent to which this nation will maintain and develop its democratic ways is dependent upon the kind of people the children become. Yet our country is without a planned policy concerning its children. Little federal action has been taken to help the states and communities to meet basic needs common to all children in a democracy.

Basic needs are food, clothing, shelter, recreation, affection, and a sense of security. Children must have food of the quantity and quality that makes physical growth possible, clothing and shelter adequate for comfort and self-respect, recreation and care that guarantee the maximum physical and mental health. They must have experiences through which their skills, aptitudes and attitudes may be found out, developed and used for the benefit of themselves and others. They must have guidance that helps them to contribute their creative efforts to society, to function as effective citizens, to engage in satisfying work with adequate pay, and to learn ways of living together in peace and happiness.

The financial co-operation of the federal government with the states and communities—a principle well established in federal law—is necessary in order to obtain the services that will satisfy these needs.

Constructive planning for children is one of the most important tasks which can be undertaken. Over-all planning is essential. Planning for one group of children and then another—usually to meet an emergency of adult living rather than the needs of childhood—tends toward unbalanced programs, unhealthy competition between agencies, the creation of favored groups, and the neglect of the great majority of children.

All the children of all the people at all levels of development from conception to maturity should be included in community, state, and national programs of action—regardless of race, color, creed, nationality, or place of residence.

Programs for children should be co-ordinated. The fullest development of the children waits upon such co-ordination. Therefore all agencies—public and private—should work toward this end.

American family life will be strengthened and enriched by services that assist the home in providing for the needs of children. It is the needs of the children and their families that should determine the agencies to be set up and the co-ordinated programs to be carried out.

STRUCTURAL REORGANIZATION

This conference heartily approves the action taken by President Truman in asking that Congress enact legislation granting the President authority to reorganize the departments and agencies of the executive branch of the federal government.

The particular interest of this conference is the conservation and development of human resources of America, especially of the children and youth. No more important objective could be kept in mind in the reorganization of the government.

The federal government is doing much in this important field, in fact far more than most citizens realize. There are at least 33 federal

agencies that deal with programs and services for children and youth, services in education, health, recreation, employment, security, and similar fields or activities. The exact amount of expenditure for these services is difficult to determine, but it is certain that it runs into a few hundred million dollars.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the present federal agencies for services for children and youth is that they are scattered through many departments without adequate co-ordination and often in competition with each other. Some of these agencies are primarily engaged in services to states, localities, and private agencies in the nature of leadership, stimulation, consultation, and research; others in administering federal funds, especially grants-in-aid; and still others in directly operating programs. During the recent years the diffusion of services has increased several fold under the pressures and necessities of the depression and the war.

The complexity of the present organization of services for children and youth can be well illustrated in the field of education. Of the ten Cabinet departments and the "Little Cabinet Agencies" and the four major Commissions and Boards in the executive branch of the government, all except the Post Office Department are directly engaged in educational activities many of which affect the programs of the state and local school systems and higher educational institutions. While it is perhaps true that some of these programs are of such nature that they can not well be separated from the agencies now conducting them, such is not the case in many important and vital instances. In all cases there is need for a high degree of co-ordination and co-operation and all agencies dealing with state and local educational institutions should have to clear their activities through the regular federal and state agencies designated to deal with education.

At the present time the U. S. Office of Education is operated as a bureau of the Federal Security Agency; schools in national parks and monuments, schools in reclamation projects, schools in war relocation centers, and education in outlying territories and possessions are operated under the Department of Interior; vocational education is operated by the Office of Education, while apprenticeship training is operated by the Department of Labor; the school lunch program is operated by the Department of Agriculture; the National Training School for Boys is operated by the Department of Justice; funds for school building facilities and for the maintenance and operation of regular schools and extended school services in war-congested areas are administered exclusively by the Federal Works Agency. These examples of diffusion of federal programs in education are but a few of the many that could be cited.

What is needed is a major reorganization of the federal structure for administering the education, health, welfare, and many other services for children and youth. In no other way can needed co-ordination, co-operation, and unity of services and purposes be obtained. In no other way can the present benefits of the services of the personnel involved and of the millions of dollars now being spent by the federal government for these services be obtained.

Except for sound and tested reason no agency engaged in specific programs for the conservation and development of children and youth should be exempted from being placed in a properly co-ordinated position in the suggested new integrated department of the executive branch of the government. Where exception proves to be the only sound and feasible procedure, executive provision and requirements should be made for co-operation with the divisions of the new department and for the elimination of duplication of efforts and services.

For consideration of the President, we suggest that the new department devoted to the conservation and development of human resources be assigned Cabinet status. Such status will place the federal programs dealing with human resources in a position of prestige, recognition, and influence equal to the position of other departments devoted to economic affairs, natural resources, and national armed defense.

The chief functions of such a department of the federal government should include the following:

1. Set the standards of co-operation and co-ordination among the several divisions, bureaus, and offices under its administration.
2. Develop standards in co-operating with local, state, and other federal agencies and with private agencies for the development of personnel, facilities, services, and administrative organizations.
3. Co-operate with national, state, and local agencies, and with private and voluntary agencies in the development of programs concerned with the education, health, recreation and welfare, and social insurance.
4. Furnish expert consultative services to states and local governmental units and agencies.
5. Administer financial grants-in-aid provided by the Congress to the states and communities in accordance with need as determined by objective formulas and standards.
6. Conduct research in all fields of human conservation and development, and collect, analyze, and distribute essential statistical data in this field.

The operation of the program affecting children and youth in the new department of the federal government should be carried on in accordance with the following principles:

1. The administration of federal, state, and local programs such as education, public health, and welfare, should operate through the regularly constituted agency responsible for such programs. For example, the maintenance and operation of schools and extensive school services, and the planning and location of school buildings are not functions of the Federal Works Agency, but of state departments of education with the counsel and assistance of the U. S. Office of Education. The Office of Education should deal only with the state departments of education; and the relationships of local schools to the program should be through their respective state departments of education. Similar lines of relationship should be expressed in other fields of service.
2. The programs for human conservation and development, especially those affecting children and youth, should be recognized primarily as community functions. The function of the federal government is to furnish grants-in-aid sufficient to guarantee to communities and states a floor of opportunities and services below which people of no community should be permitted to fall; to furnish leadership, guidance, and stimulation. The functions of the state are somewhat similar to those of the federal government. The direct operation of the programs should be left to the fullest possible extent to the communities.

LEGISLATION

We believe that this country is wise enough and rich enough to provide adequate health, education and welfare services for its children. We think that the home, the community, the state and the federal government should share this responsibility. Where the needs are too great to be met by local and state finances we believe the federal government should assist.

1. To meet the emergency caused by the termination of wartime child care services and pending permanent legislation, we request that Interim Funds to assist local communities in continuing the essential services formerly provided through the Lanham Act be provided the U. S. Office of Education and U. S. Children's Bureau. These are the regularly constituted agencies responsible for children. By this arrangement much overlapping of supervision, duplication of effort and waste of money can be avoided. Since most

school budgets are set up on a yearly basis the sudden curtailment of funds before the end of the fiscal year has deprived many children of needed services.

2. We restate our interest in and approval of Federal Aid to free tax-supported public schools based upon the principles of
Equalization
A maximum of local control
Provision for nursery schools and kindergartens
3. We see the need for and recommend the prompt enactment of additional legislation to provide adequate health, welfare, and educational services to all children, such as:
 - a. The provision of school lunches as a permanent part of the general health program for children. We heartily endorse the fundamental principle that school lunches should be administered by the federal, state, and local education departments as a part of the general program for children, not primarily as a method for the distribution of farm surpluses.
 - b. The general principle of the free distribution of surplus commodities which are no longer necessary to the military but of tremendous potential value to education, welfare, and health programs.
 - c. A greatly extended and improved school program to meet the health, physical fitness, and recreational needs of children and youth.
 - d. Maternal and child welfare services wherever needed for mothers and children.
 - e. School building program that will meet the physical and mental needs of the children and serve the community.
4. We approve a reorganization of government which will co-ordinate the efforts of various federal agencies now rendering health, welfare, and educational services.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Committee makes the following recommendations.

- i. That the findings of this conference should be implemented by action of the national organizations represented here. Ways in which this can be done are:
 - a. Report conference findings to their executive bodies and/or direct to state and local groups.

- b. Publicize findings in official journals or other publications.
 - c. Plan for discussion at annual, state, and local group meetings.
 - d. Publicize results of discussion through local channels such as the press and radio.
 - e. Supply bibliographies related to the findings.
 - f. Study legislation related to findings.
 - g. Support legislation endorsed by each organization through such means as communicating with congressmen, informing others, and suggesting action.
2. That we inform other national organizations of this conference:
 - a. Offer to make the findings of the conference available to them on request.
 - b. Ask them to unite their efforts for children with ours.
 3. That in the statement to the President of the United States we indicate that as a result of this meeting we will support in every possible way the statement to which we are all agreed.

STUDY KITS ON WORLD CO-OPERATION

The United Nations Information Office, in co-operation with the U. S. Office of Education, has prepared study kits of materials on the United Nations which are proving useful to teachers. These kits include booklets on the United Nations, their peoples, their history, their work, what they have done in war, and how they are co-operating in peace. There are attractive poster charts in color, descriptions of the United Nations meetings to date, suggestions for individual and group activities, reading lists, and other aids.

Information and order blanks showing contents of each kit, with prices, can be secured from the United Nations Information Office, 610 Fifth Avenue, New York 20.

THE VISITING TEACHER

The Place of Visiting Teacher Services in the School Program, U. S. Office of Education Bulletin 1945, No. 6, by Katherine M. Cook, Consultant in Educational Services in the U. S. Office of Education, is a 46-page presentation of the results of a questionnaire study of visiting teacher services in cities of the

United States of a population of 10,000 or more to secure information on the status of visiting teachers in the systems studied.

One of the interesting disclosures discussed in the bulletin is that many of the physical defects for which men were rejected by the Selective Service were those that had been discovered but not remedied during the elementary school years. This evidence of neglect in providing preventive and remedial measures for children at an age when they would have been most effective is one of the many reasons for current emphasis on the importance of visiting teacher services.

The bulletin gives attention to the development of visiting teacher (school social worker) services in various cities, preparation of the teacher, extension and expansion of the services, salary scales, uniformity of standards, and the like.

Copies of the bulletin may be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 10 cents each.

NEW PUBLICATION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Food and Nutrition is the title of a 172-page illustrated bulletin now being distributed by the California State Department of Education. This bulletin was prepared under the direction of the Division of Elementary Education, State Department of Education, in co-operation with the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, State Department of Public Health, and the curriculum departments of four rural counties, Colusa, Marin, Mariposa, and Tehama. It was approved and recommended for adoption by the State Curriculum Commission, and adopted by the State Board of Education as a manual for teachers of elementary school grades.

Consideration of the subject of food and nutrition is essential in the curriculum because of its relation to such basic human needs as the production, distribution, and utilization of food in maintaining minimum health standards of the nation. Teachers are required to have more than a casual acquaintance with the

subject matter. This bulletin has been prepared to serve as an introduction to the general field with the hope that teachers will be oriented and assisted in building a background of accurate information. Part I treats of man's quest for food from his early beginnings to the present day. Part II deals with basic considerations regarding nutrition. Part III embodies a composite account of the activities carried on in a number of schools in the counties participating in this compilation. Appendixes give tables for computing calorie requirements and content, and suggestions for equipment and management of school lunchrooms. A twenty-page bibliography contains references for teachers and children.

Copies of the publication are being sent to county and city superintendents of schools for redistribution to elementary and junior high schools and for use by supervisors and directors of instruction. Copies for others may be ordered from the Division of Textbooks and Publications. The price is 50 cents per copy, plus state sales tax on California orders.

FEDERAL REPORT ON NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition Education in the Elementary School, prepared in the U. S. Office of Education, is a 12-page follow-up report of the co-operative efforts of the U. S. Office of Education, the Indiana State Teachers College, and the National Programs Branch of the War Food Administration, at Terre Haute, in a nutrition workshop for staff members of teacher-education institutions which was designed to stimulate interest in modifying the curriculum for preservice and in-service teachers at the elementary school level.

The follow-up activities emphasize significant modifications in teacher-education programs, activities of classroom teachers, community relationships, and one comprehensive program with emphasis upon nutrition. Some excellent procedures were developed as a result of the efforts of these groups.

Requests for this material should be directed to Dr. Helen K. Mackintosh, U. S. Office of Education, Washington 25, D. C.

EDUCATION IN TRAINING SCHOOLS FOR DELINQUENT YOUTH

Education in Training Schools for Delinquent Youth, U. S. Office of Education Bulletin 1945, No. 5, prepared by Christine P. Ingram in collaboration with Elise H. Martens and Katherine M. Cook, is the result of a request from the National Association of Training Schools for the assignment of a staff member of the U. S. Office of Education to visit training schools throughout the country to advise and assist in the perfecting of a proper program. The discussion and recommendations in this bulletin are derived from the observations and findings during the visits made by thirteen members of the staff of the U. S. Office of Education and from related sources.

The publication may be purchased for 20 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

CHILDREN AND YOU

Children and You: A Primer of Child Care, a small pamphlet by Eva Knox Evans, published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago 15, offers interesting and amusing advice to teachers on the care and management of young children. The price of the pamphlet is 10 cents.

CURRICULUM UNIT ON INTER-GROUP EDUCATION

During the 1944 summer session, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, in co-operation with the Portland, Oregon, Public Schools and the Oregon State System of Higher Education, sponsored a workshop in intercultural education on the campus of Reed College. Among the interesting project units developed was one entitled *Let's Become Acquainted*, an eighth-grade curriculum unit to foster inter-group appreciation. This unit was prepared by M. Ellen Dalquist, Glencoe Elementary School, Portland, Oregon. The entire workshop was under the direction of Miss Olive Horrigan of the public schools of Springfield, Massachusetts. Orders for the unit should be addressed to Paul W. Pinckney, Portland Public Schools, Portland, Oregon. The price is 10 cents a copy.

NEGRO HISTORY WEEK, FEBRUARY 10-16, 1946

Free materials telling of the accomplishments of the Negro race and the place of the Negro in the history of America will be provided by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., for use in connection with the observance of Negro History Week in the public schools beginning February 10, 1946. Requests for information should be addressed to the Association, 1538 Ninth Street, N. W., Washington 1, D. C.

Negro History Week was first celebrated in 1926. Its purpose is to stress the contributions of the Negro race to American and world civilization and to combat race prejudice everywhere.

HEALTH TEACHING AIDS

Tested health-teaching aids for kindergarten, primary, elementary, and high school levels are available from the California Dairy Council in San Francisco and Los Angeles. These are designed for integration with projects on farms, dairying, dental health, community welfare, public health, foreign lands, nutrition, sports, meal planning, prenatal and child care. They include study units, posters, reference material, stories and plays, and folders and leaflets for parents.

The materials are inexpensive, colored posters ranging from 13 cents each to 60 cents for a set of eight. Story booklets in color run from 5 cents to 15 cents apiece. Requests for these materials should be addressed to the California Dairy Council, 216 Pine Street, San Francisco 4, or 532 Chamber of Commerce Building, Los Angeles 15, and should state the age group or project for which teaching aids are desired.

SUPPLEMENT TO LIST OF BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

"A Supplement to *Five Hundred Books for Children*," compiled by Nora E. Beust and Eleanore F. Clift, Library Service Division, U. S. Office of Education, to aid educators, librarians, and parents in the selection of books for children, was published in the October, 1945, issue of *School Life*. The list includes books published 1939-1945, inclusive.

SENIOR GIRL SCOUTING

Senior Girl Scouting, a book published in 1945 for older girls and their leaders, discusses important new programs designed for training occupational therapist's aides, office and library aides, program aides, and many others.

The content of the book is largely based on the results of successful service and training activities carried on in many sections of the country. It contains 160 pages, well illustrated and indexed.

Copies of the publication may be secured from Girl Scout Headquarters, 155 East 44th Street, New York 17, New York, for 50 cents each.

NEW A. C. E. MATERIALS

The Association for Childhood Education is offering for the special price of two dollars the following list of materials to help teachers to meet today's problems.

PORTFOLIO FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS. Twelve leaflets on children of six to eight years. Includes recording and reporting growth, beginning reading, the work period, discipline. Price, 50 cents.

PORTFOLIO FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS. Twelve leaflets on children of four and five years. Includes program, the kindergarten's responsibility to reading, working with large groups, the rest period. Price, 50 cents.

PORTFOLIO FOR NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHERS. Twelve leaflets on children of two and three years. Includes program, guidance of play, records, housing, parent-teacher co-operation. Price, 50 cents.

PORTFOLIO ON MATERIALS FOR WORK AND PLAY. Twelve leaflets on the use of such materials as clay, blocks, puppets, woodworking tools, science materials. Price, 50 cents.

ABOUT CHILDREN. A reprint service bulletin of selected articles from 1944-45 issues of *Childhood Education* discussing and illustrating how children learn, feel, and grow. Price, 25 cents.

Orders should be addressed to the Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington 6, D. C.

MOTION PICTURES AND SLIDES ON PUBLIC HEALTH

The Bureau of Health Education of the California State Department of Public Health has revised its list of films and slides on public health and allied subjects available for distribution in California. The new list includes 86 films from five California distributors. These films are described briefly and grouped under some twenty headings such as Child Health, Dental Health, First Aid, Posture, Safety, and Sanitation. Six sources of other materials of this nature are also noted.

Copies of the list, reprinted from the semi-monthly publication of the Department of Public Health, *California's Health* (Vol. 2, No. 23, June 15, 1945, pp. 179-182), can be had free on request to the Bureau at 521 Phelan Building, San Francisco 2.

Y. M. C. A. FILM LIBRARY

Selected Motion Pictures 1945-1946, published by the Y. M. C. A. Motion Picture Bureau, New York, gives terms under which films may be secured from the Young Men's Christian Association and lists the contents of a large film library which will be of use to schools, colleges, and industry. The catalog may be secured from 351 Turk Street, San Francisco 2.

SURVEY OF YOUTH CENTERS

More than 3,000 teen-age centers serving about a million boys and girls have sprung up all over the United States since the start of the war, according to a survey made public recently by the Federal Security Agency's Office of Community War Services. The report indicates that most of these clubs were initiated by resourceful teen-agers themselves, many are self-operated, and in some cases are financed by the juniors. In issuing this nation-wide survey, Acting Federal Security Administrator Watson B. Miller pointed out that fun and constructive activities for young people have proved as much of a war problem in America's boom towns as the recreation needs of soldiers and war workers.

The survey, published under the title, *Youth Centers: An Appraisal and a Look Ahead*, reveals that

while the black shadow of delinquency spread over the nation, youth in many communities found their own answer. These clubs represent an innovation in the field of youth recreation, and while they are war-born they are meeting a recognized need that has long existed. They will take their place in the permanent life of many communities. They combine the freedom of the corner drugstore and the glamor of the night club. Many have been decorated and equipped by the ingenuity of the members. They are housed in anything from a vacant store to an abandoned jail.

The pamphlet tells how teen-age clubs are initiated and how they are operated and paid for, and gives practical information on facilities, programs, rules and regulations based on a sampling of 300 representative teen-age clubs. It also gives an evaluation of these clubs by recreation specialists, and discusses their relation to other community programs for youth. Illustrated with photographs of youth centers in full swing, it should serve as a guide to both new and continuing community clubs for young people. Single copies are available from the Recreation Division of the Office of Community War Services, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

A NEW CHART—"WHAT WE GET FROM TREES"

The United States Forest Service announces the publication of a chart entitled "What We Get from Trees," 40 by 28 inches in size, printed in color, and designed for classroom use. It should be particularly helpful for teachers who integrate the conservation of natural resources with their program.

A supply of this chart has been printed especially for distribution to schools. Copies may be secured free from the Regional Forester, U. S. Department of Agriculture, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco 11.

READING FOR CRITICAL THINKING

DAVID H. RUSSELL, *Associate Professor of Education,
University of California, Berkeley*

INTRODUCTION

Many events of the second World War have re-emphasized the importance of a clear thinking citizenry for the preservation and improvement of democratic institutions. On the positive side, the initiative and quick thinking of the fighting men who had lived in the freedom and responsibility of a democracy were often a contrast to the regimented thinking of men who had lived in a Fascist state. On the negative side, the apparent indifference of the German people to the causes of war, their unwillingness to accept any responsibility for the Nazi regime, show the effects of a culture where critical thinking has been stifled. Many other factors in our changing world such as the rise of Russia, the movement toward the Left in Europe, and the implications for the future of the atomic bomb, all demand people who can face problems and think through, or at least attempt to think through, their solutions. Never before have the democracies so needed individuals who can think critically and clearly about problems personal and collective. Never before have schools had a greater responsibility to encourage such critical thinking.

The responsibility of the school to help develop clear-thinking individuals rests on at least two principles:

- (a) The ability to think critically begins in early childhood and develops slowly.
- (b) The school curriculum offers many opportunities for clear thinking, especially in various types of reading activities.

NATURE OF CRITICAL THINKING

For the purposes of this article critical thinking is defined as the habit of examining statements and attacking problems in the light of related objective evidence. This definition refers, then, to a particular type of thinking rather closely related to Dewey's five or six steps in thinking. These may be stated as: (a) the awareness of a problem, (b) the collection and classification of data related to the problem, (c) the formulation of a tentative hypothesis, (d) the judging of the worth of the hypothesis by mental try-out, accepting or rejecting, (e) actual test of the hypothesis, (f) possibly some conclusion or solution to the problem.

Obviously this type of thinking does not apply to all problems. Children must be helped to solve many small problems, such as selection of a hair-ribbon or a game for recess, in an almost automatic way. There is also a different kind of thinking of a contemplative sort, almost in reverie, which may have certain values. Symonds suggests that Dewey's five steps are insufficient for description of all types of thinking and analyzes thought processes under some nineteen headings.¹ In a recent provocative book on college teaching, *Teacher in America*, Barzun describes creative thinking as a process much more dependent on chance ideas and sudden inspiration.²

But while critical thinking as here defined is only one type of thinking, it must be regarded as one of the most important abilities for any citizen of a democracy. Each child and adult has important personal problems worthy of his best critical thinking. But in addition to personal problems, older children and adults in any democracy need some powers of facing and coping with group problems. Children face school problems in curricular and co-curricular activities such as what construction to attempt in a unit of work or what officers to elect for a students' council. Older children and adults are continually meeting problems in their immediate and larger communities. It seems

¹ Percival M. Symonds, *Education and the Psychology of Thinking*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1936. Pp. xii+306.

² Jacques Barzun, *Teacher in America*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1945. Pp. vi+322.

reasonable that older children as well as adults attempt, for example, to solve problems of community recreation centers. Even if they can not solve them, they must be aware, too, that problems exist on a larger scale. School children as well as adults can know that the problem of what aid the United States shall give different European countries in the immediate post-war years is a problem on which they may have clearly thought-out opinions. As citizens of "one world" they can know that the answer to this problem will affect their lives intimately and irrevocably. Such problems, on a small or large scale, demand critical thinking as here defined.

GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT OF ABILITY TO THINK

There is now considerable evidence to suggest that ability to think critically begins in early childhood and develops gradually. In general, young children accept most conditions around them and only later begin to examine them critically. For some time elementary school curriculums have been handicapped by Piaget's concept that children's thinking is largely ego-centric until twelve years, when it suddenly blossoms into reasoning ability.³ Experimental work since Piaget made his statement accepts the ego-centricity of some of the thinking of young children but also shows rather conclusively that they are capable of some sort of testing and generalization at an early age. For example, Heidebreder states that "the total reaction involved in solving problems is recognizably present in four-year-old children"⁴ and Moore found that children are capable of syllogistic reasoning at the age of six years (the youngest tested) and develop this ability gradually at least up to twelve years of age.⁵ On the other hand, studies by Ray⁶ and by Laycock⁷ indicate

³ Jean Piaget, *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928. Pp. viii+260.

⁴ Edna F. Heidebreder, "Problem Solving in Children and Adults," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, XXXV (December, 1928), 522-45.

⁵ Thomas V. Moore, *The Reasoning Ability of Children in the First Years of School Life*. Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1929. Pp. viii+34.

⁶ Joseph J. Ray, *The Generalizing Ability of Dull, Bright, and Superior Children*. Peabody Contributions to Education No. 175. Nashville, Tenn.: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1936. Pp. xiv+110.

⁷ Samuel R. Laycock, *Adaptability to New Situations*. Baltimore: Warwick and York, Inc., 1929. Pp. xi+170.

that some children of eleven and twelve years have difficulty in making generalizations, especially when the clues to the problems are not verbalized. These illustrative investigations and a number of others show rather conclusively that reasoning ability begins about three years and develops gradually with experience and language. There is no evidence to suggest that there is any fundamental difference in the way children and adults think. Accordingly, the obvious task of the teacher is to arrange situations which stimulate and provide opportunities for critical thinking.

CRITICAL THINKING IN THE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Critical thinking seems to involve at least the following conditions:

- (a) A knowledge of the field or fields in which the thinking is being done
- (b) A general attitude of questioning and suspended judgment; a habit of examining before accepting
- (c) Some application of the methods of logical analysis or scientific inquiry (related to Dewey's five steps above)
- (d) Taking action in light of this analysis or reasoning ⁸

These four conditions are general guides to teachers who want to emphasize critical thinking in their programs.

The applications of these conditions to the daily activities of any class depend upon the nature of the teacher as an individual and the nature of her group. In a sixth-grade social studies class discussing why airplanes can fly the teacher will probably bring up the first condition. She says, "What must we know before we can answer this question?" The second condition, the habit of suspended judgment, may be practiced in considering whether or not the answer to an arithmetic problem is a likely one, but it has many wider applications such as in considering the claims of an advertisement or determining right or wrong from the textbook discussion of an international dispute or the use of

⁸ David H. Russell, "Critical Thinking in Childhood and Youth," *The School* (Toronto), XXXI (May, 1943), 744-50.

natural resources. The third condition will arise rather naturally in a situation involving a problem that can be answered by an experiment in science. The sixth grade referred to may ask, "How do we know air has weight?" or a second grade may wonder, "Under what conditions will seeds grow into plants?" There is probably little value in naming the steps in such "scientific" thinking for most elementary school children, but after many experiences with this method of answering the problem they may be able to generalize about the steps they take.

The illustrations above suggest that every phase of the school curriculum may be utilized to stimulate and give practice in critical thinking. One of the chief purposes of this article is to show how reading activities are connected with and lead to such thinking.

THE COMPLETE READING ACT

In former times, teachers and parents said a child could read when he recognized a few words in a primer. This belief, incidentally, sometimes led to a form of "word-calling" which was a most inadequate reading experience. Later the idea of reading was extended to include both word recognition and paragraph comprehension. Even this concept is incomplete. Today reading is regarded as involving not only recognition and comprehension but also interpretation and action. The reading act is composed of mechanics, understanding, and enjoyment, and also thinking and doing. It involves relating what one reads to previous experience and evaluating this material critically. As someone has remarked, reading is not so much getting experience from the printed page as bringing experience to it.

When initial skills in reading are mastered, of course, reading may be used to enrich and extend experience as well. The wise teacher will use reading to reinforce other experiences and to organize them. It is still true, however, that the materials read must be considered critically. Most of us are too willing to accept what we read. It is often difficult to detect opinions among the facts of a newspaper or magazine or to see the indirect propaganda of a motion picture or a book. Teachers and

parents are all willing to subscribe to the dictum that schools should teach children not what to think, but how to think. One of the best ways of doing this is by emphasizing all the steps of the complete reading act.

ACTIVITIES FOR ENCOURAGING CRITICAL THINKING WHILE READING

The developmental point of view given above suggests that, even in the primary grades, reading for critical thinking has a definite place. A third grade class may discover that the facts given in a science reader do not apply to their particular district. Even a first grade may discover that not everything in print is true when it underlines *Yes* or *No* following such statements as "Dogs can sing." Bertrand Russell describes how he would develop habits of critical thinking in young children by contrasting written statements with objective evidence:

. . . If I had to run an infant school, I should have two sorts of sweets, if I were the teacher—one very, very nice and the other very, very nasty. The very nasty ones should be advertised with all the skill of the most able advertisers in the world. On the other hand, the nice ones should have a coldly scientific statement, setting forth their ingredients and consequent excellence. I should let the children choose which they would have. I should, of course, vary the assortment from day to day, but after a week or two they would probably choose the ones with the coldly scientific statement. That would be one up. I should go on in the same way all through.

I should do the same in teaching history. I should take them through great controversies of the past. I should let them read the most eloquent statements in favor of positions that nobody now holds. For example, before the American Civil War, the Southern orators—who were magnificent orators—made the most moving speeches in defense of slavery. If you read those speeches now, you almost begin to think it must have been a good thing. I should read them all kinds of very, very eloquent defenses of views that nobody now holds at all, such as the importance of burning witches.⁹

⁹ Bertrand Russell, "Education for Democracy," *Bulletin of the Department of Secondary-School Principals*, XXIII (March, 1939), 6-16. Condensed in *Education Digest*, IV (April, 1939), 1-4.

There are many more reading situations in which the four general conditions of knowledge, the questioning attitude, logical analysis, and action are prominent enough to warrant the group's special effort to think critically about what is read. Many advertisements, such as recent ones claiming that a certain single product had much to do with winning the war, can be analyzed rather easily for their absurdities. Some teachers of older pupils have found it profitable to study types of propaganda devices and then analyze printed materials to discover them. This has been done successfully at the junior high school level by Kottmeyer.¹⁰ Osborne has shown that just knowing the devices of propaganda is not enough. The important thing is for teachers and pupils to develop in themselves a critical attitude toward it.¹¹

Habits of critical thinking while reading are often described as good "study habits." The ability to read a whole factual selection rapidly before examining it in sections may aid critical thinking. The habit of stopping to think over what has been read and summarizing it in two or three main points may be equally valuable. Most teachers encourage their pupils to consult two or three different sources, where possible, for different points of view on a controversial topic. Even in the second grade, the children may evaluate the actions of some of the characters in a story.

In all the work of a class, the teacher may try to promote the four conditions listed above. She will continually help pupils to recognize and attack problems in their school and community which are important to them. She will also attempt to translate discussion and reading into some form of action. This must be so, for the action disciplines the thinking. It is the weakness of much school work that it remains on the verbal level. Boys and girls can learn responsibility for their conclusions only by putting them into action.

¹⁰ William Kottmeyer, "Classroom Activities in Critical Reading," *School Review*, LII (November, 1944), 557-64.

¹¹ Wayland W. Osborne, "Teaching Resistance to Propaganda," *Journal of Experimental Education*, VIII (January, 1939), 1-17.

CONCLUSION

The ability to recognize and solve personal and group problems is fundamental to the preservation and improvement of our democracy. Education must help provide for the development of emotional controls but also an active, critical approach to statements private and public, and to problems of common concern. The ability to think critically about such matters develops slowly through childhood and can be fostered by the school. To do this the school must plan for the inclusion of such problems in the daily program and for ways of helping boys and girls recognize, attack, solve, and evaluate their procedures in meeting such problems. Reading activities offer a particularly valuable situation for the stimulation of critical thinking. In some reading programs too much time is spent still on the mechanics of reading to the exclusion of increased understanding and habits of good thinking. Mere literacy will not save a democracy. From childhood its citizens must be able to understand ideas and problems about which they read and they must be able to examine them critically. Only as they keep open such channels for the communication of ideas can a people be saved from a military caste or power-hungry leaders. This article has suggested four general conditions and a number of specific activities which will help develop a citizenry capable of such critical thinking.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE CURRICULUM COMMISSION FOR A FRAME- WORK FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES ¹

JAY D. CONNER, *Assistant Superintendent San Diego City Schools,
Member State Curriculum Commission*

The State Curriculum Commission is appreciative of this opportunity to make a progress report upon one phase of the general framework problem which has been presented at several previous meetings of the Association of California Public School Superintendents as well as the other professional associations of our state. We are sincerely grateful for the continued co-operation and support which this organization has given to our efforts in working toward the objective of a practical framework of education for California. I wish to make it clear that this report deals with only one part of the framework problem, namely, the designation of a sequential plan of allocating major areas of learning experiences in the social studies. It does not deal with the general objectives of education nor with the principles which should determine teaching methods.

Functions of the Curriculum Commission. With the fine assistance we have received both from organizations and individual school systems considerable progress has been made in fulfilling the functions prescribed by law for the Commission. Perhaps it would be well to restate these functions briefly so that the relationship of the Curriculum Commission to the State Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the individual school systems of the state will be entirely clear.

Education Code Section 10009 provides that the "Commission shall study problems of courses of study in the schools of

¹ Address delivered before the Association of California Public School Superintendents, Sacramento, California, October 4, 1945.

the State and may recommend to the State Board of Education the adoption of minimum standards for courses of study in the kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools."

Education Code Section 10010 prescribes that "courses of study in the public schools shall conform to such minimum standards when adopted" by the Board.

Education Code Section 11155 requires that the "Curriculum Commission shall recommend to the State Board of Education specifications for textbooks for uniform use in the schools of the State so that the textbooks adopted shall conform to the minimum standard for courses of study."

Composition of the Commission. The Commission is representative of individual school systems and educational institutions of the state. Its membership is designated by law to include one classroom teacher, one elementary school principal, one secondary school principal, a county superintendent, a city superintendent, a junior college member, a college teacher of education, and three members at large.

Co-ordination with State Department of Education. The Commission has always operated in close collaboration with the State Department of Education in carrying out its functions. The Commission has no paid staff and it meets from six to ten times per year for periods of two or three days at a time. Co-ordination of the activities of the Commission with those of the State Department of Education is provided through the Superintendent of Public Instruction who at once heads the State Department of Education, is Chairman of the Curriculum Commission, and is secretary and executive officer of the State Board of Education.

Background of the social studies framework. The need for a framework for the social studies is by no means a recent development. In the late 1920's and early 1930's the Commission sponsored a series of studies which resulted in the publication of two volumes: *Teachers' Guide to Child Development: Manual for Kindergarten and Primary Teachers* (1930), and *Teachers' Guide to Child Development in the Intermediate Grades* (1936). In the middle 1930's the Commission again

sponsored a state-wide curriculum study by a Committee on the Scope and Sequence of the Major Learnings of the Curriculum.

New needs have arisen. It detracts in no sense from the excellence of these earlier works to say that in the judgment of the Commission the time has come when we need to take more definite action to meet the needs which are pertinent to our present situation.

The guides to child development have exerted a powerful influence in unifying and promoting a more widespread use of newer techniques of teaching in the schools of California. I think that one of the best compliments I can pay to them is to say that in a recent series of workshop meetings in the school system I represent, these guides were evaluated as still offering one of the best resources for use in depicting basic teaching procedure.

On the other hand, none of these earlier efforts goes far enough to satisfy certain urgent needs which exist today and which are likely to become of increasing urgency in the immediate future. The teachers guides were concerned primarily with problems of teaching method and procedure and did not provide for a sequential organization of learning experiences in the social studies.

The work of the Committee on Scope and Sequence barely opened up the problem of a State framework. It stimulated a great deal of thought by those who participated, and it is of some historic interest in that it recognized the importance of maturation and social determinants as factors in the over-all curriculum-planning problem.

But neither it nor the subsequent follow-up studies which have been conducted by such organizations as the California School Supervisors Association have resulted in commonly accepted organizations of learning sequences into course of study outlines which show much similarity from one school system to another.

The latest social studies adoptions. The latest adoptions of social studies textbooks in the state were made at a time when educational practice was in such a state of flux that it was liter-

ally impossible to select any text or any combination of textbooks that would fit the course of study arrangements of all the different communities of the state.

Wide divergences still exist. As the time drew near for new adoptions in the social studies it became apparent that wide divergences still existed in the courses of study of various school systems. A study made by Miss Helen Heffernan, Chief of the Division of Elementary Education of the State Department of Education, and submitted to the Commission in 1941 revealed so little uniformity in the allocation of learning experiences to grade levels that it was apparent the same difficulty would exist in making new adoptions unless action were taken to provide a basis for agreement upon some minimal amount of uniformity.

This was deemed a problem of great urgency in view of the requirements of our state school code requiring uniform textbooks. It was felt that education in California would be in an untenable position if as a state we provided textbooks which were not used in the classrooms of many school systems in the state. We were advised by counsel of the State Department of Education that there is no legal method whereby different textbooks may be provided for one school system than for another, in order to supply books which are appropriate to course of study requirements which have no common denominator of subject content. The Education Code provisions governing distribution of state textbooks were made even more stringent at the last session of the legislature, as most of you know.

Superintendents endorsed study plan. Consequently, in an effort to find a way out of the dilemma, the Commission sought the advice and counsel of members of the Association of California Public School Superintendents, first in an informal meeting at the University of California at Los Angeles in connection with a summer conference, and later in a formal presentation and discussion in a well-attended section meeting of the annual superintendents' conference.

Study program commenced. With an assurance of support from this meeting a series of activities was commenced. A meeting was held in San Francisco to which the presidents of

the various professional organizations of the state and the California Congress of Parents and Teachers were invited. These organizations included, besides the superintendents' association, the California Elementary School Principals' Association, the Association of California Secondary School Principals, the California School Supervisors Association, the California Teachers Association, and the California Association for Childhood Education. Subsequently, meetings were arranged with these organizations at their annual state conferences where members of the Commission presented the proposals for a state-wide study and invited the participation of the organizations in developing recommendations for a state framework.

In the meantime individual school systems of the state co-operated by sending to the State Department of Education their present course-of-study outlines and related curriculum materials. The Commission is deeply appreciative of the excellent co-operation which made these materials available.

Public hearing in Los Angeles. After studying the data from these sources, it was apparent to the Commission that no framework could be developed out of current practice, nor could any acceptable framework be developed out of the proposals of any single professional organization except as both individual school systems and organizations were willing to make compromises in the interest of greater uniformity. It was therefore decided to hold a public hearing and invite representative school systems to send members of their curriculum departments and the professional organizations previously mentioned to send the official of their choice prepared to discuss with the Commission those compromises which were possible and practical.

City and county school systems invited. The following school systems were invited to send representatives to this hearing: Fresno, Los Angeles City, Los Angeles County, Oakland, San Diego County, San Francisco.

The following additional cities were represented at the hearing, either through members of the Curriculum Commission or staff members representing professional organizations:

Alameda, Claremont, Huntington Beach, Napa, Sacramento, San Diego City, San Jose, San Mateo, Santa Barbara.

The following organizations sent representatives to this hearing: Association of California Public School Superintendents; Association of California Secondary School Principals; California Elementary School Principals' Association; California School Supervisors Association.

William G. Paden, City Superintendent of Schools, Alameda, representing the superintendents, Dean Frank N. Freeman of the School of Education of the University of California, and Miss Helen Heffernan, Chief, Division of Elementary Education for the State Department of Education, served the Commission as advisers during the hearings and in the deliberations which followed.

The public hearing lasted two full days. Each participant made a presentation of the framework problem from the point of view of the school system or the organization which he represented, following which he was questioned by members of the Commission concerning specific problems involved in effecting adjustments to possible compromises.

Following this public hearing, the Commission met to harmonize the various proposals into a rough draft of a framework. This preliminary draft was studied by members of the Commission and the State Department of Education and was further refined in subsequent meetings.

Finally, at the July 1945 meeting of the State Board of Education, the Curriculum Commission recommended and the State Board adopted the grade allocations as submitted, for grades four to eight inclusive. The following outline of these allocations is quoted from the minutes of the Board meeting.

GRADE PLACEMENT OF SUBJECT MATTER

In accordance with the Framework for the Social Studies of the State Curriculum Commission, it is assumed that the social studies program of the primary grades will have provided experiences leading to social understanding of home, school, and community life, and such problems as how man obtains food, clothing, and shelter, appropriate to the maturity of primary children.

FOURTH GRADE

California and Mexico

- A. Early California
- B. Contemporaneous Mexican Life.

FIFTH GRADE

The United States

- A. Colonization and settlement
- B. Geographic studies, including the physical features, natural resources and conservation needs of our country
- C. American period in California with emphasis on geographic environment.

SIXTH GRADE

The Western Hemisphere and Pacific Area, emphasizing the function of transportation and communication as integrating factors.

- A. Emphasis on discovery, and colonization and settlement
- B. Consideration of chief geographic features, economic resources, and occupations of the people
- C. Transportation, emphasizing a better understanding of economic and geographic relationships
- D. Communication, emphasizing a better understanding of cultural relationships.

SEVENTH GRADE

The Eastern Hemisphere: the cultures and their contributions to our civilization.

- A. Study of the geographic, economic and cultural factors underlying the life of selected peoples in Asia, Europe and Africa.

EIGHTH GRADE

United States History, Geography and Civics

- A. Development of the United States with emphasis on large movements; social, political and economic
- B. Regional geography
- C. The people of our nation
- D. American ideals, beliefs, and conceptions as expressed in great American documents. Rights, privileges and responsibilities of citizens.

The Commission did not recommend grade allocations for the first three grades, for no state texts are contemplated at this time for those levels, and no recommendations have been submitted in grades nine to twelve for the same reason. It would seem highly desirable, however, to move as rapidly as possible toward state-wide agreements at these levels as well as in the grades directly affected by the adoption of state textbooks.

What the report is and what it is not. The recommendations of the Curriculum Commission are not submitted in the belief that they make any great contribution to new curriculum practices in the social studies. This is perhaps not the peculiar function of the State Curriculum Commission. Certainly more effective agencies exist in the State Department of Education, in the schools of education of colleges and universities, and in the curriculum staffs of city and county school systems to give leadership in the pioneering of new practices in curriculum making. The Commission does submit, however, that its recommendations offer the only practical basis for moving in the direction of an essential and irreducible minimum of uniformity in the social studies. It is the best possible adaptation to courses of study which vary widely; it is the best possible compromise among differing and conflicting conceptions of what should constitute the core of social studies instruction. The Commission has attempted to keep separate the factors of subject content and teaching methods. It is not necessary, in the judgment of the Commission, to do more at the state level than specify the general areas of pupil experience at the succeeding grade levels. Books and other instructional materials furnished on the basis of these general decisions may be utilized in the individual school systems in accordance with the specific provisions of local courses of study and by methods which are deemed appropriate in the communities served.

What are the next steps? With the adoption of this report and the call for bids for textbooks, the Curriculum Commission has gone about as far as it can go toward serving the needs of the schools of this state for some degree of uniformity in the social studies. But it should be emphasized that if this is all that is done

little will have been accomplished and much time and effort will have been wasted. The Commission has developed the basis for more uniform instructional practice, but this will actually take place only as the individual school systems of the state make such adjustments in course of study outlines as will bring them into conformity with the general pattern of the state framework.

Revision of local courses of study. The next step would seem to be the revision of local city and county courses of study to make whatever adjustments are called for by the state outline. These adjustments will in most cases amount to little more than minor shifts in grade placement. These adjustments can be made without disturbing either the philosophical base on which local instructional programs have been built, or the dominant relationships in classroom situations which are desired in various school systems.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

BERNICE BAXTER, *Administrative Assistant, Oakland Public Schools*

School administrators and supervisors are modifying their procedures of in-service education and improvement of teaching with sharpened attention to the personal and social development of the teacher. Teachers must be aided in sound interpretation of the social structure and of the demands made upon children and adults as they live from day to day within their own individual patterns and sets of social controls and impingements. As never before, teachers need to understand children and adults in the interacting social relationships of their environment. Pre-service and in-service professional education must help teachers to equip themselves to aid their students in the accumulation of such experience as will assure willingness and competence in democratic citizenship.

Most cities and counties have recognized the necessity for in-service education which will supplement even the best pre-service education that teacher education institutions can devise. The performance by schools of a task such as that suggested requires continuous effort on the part of all professional personnel. Teachers, supervisors and consultants, principals and superintendents all have responsibilities to one another in building within the community a unified educational program which will supplement the services of other agencies interested in assuring conditions favorable to the best personal and social development of young persons, in particular, but to older citizens as well.

Oakland teachers have had professional in-service guidance for a long time. For many years, teachers, supervisors and consultants, principals and superintendents have worked together in the continuous improvement of the curriculum. There has been a close and friendly relationship with many organizations and groups which contribute to social betterment. The curriculum

has been evolved with direct attention to home and family interests, to recreation and library resources, to the churches, to private and public agencies serving youth and to the experiences which children in the several areas of the city are having. School persons, as time has permitted, have served on community committees of one type or another and have considered themselves functioning members of their respective home and school neighborhoods. But with all of this, teachers have not had opportunity for uninterrupted participation in professional activities which contributed adequately to their own development. They have made their contribution to the improvement of learning conditions for children at the sacrifice of their own time and energy because their study has been made after school hours during a busy school year. In summer, they were left to their own devices in finding refreshment and opportunities for professional inspiration. Their summer activities remained essentially unrelated to their classroom problems.

During this past summer, a new development in the Oakland in-service program of teacher education met with enthusiastic support of those who participated in its initiation. A summer conference was announced as a possibility early in the school year. Details of organization of the summer conference were considered in the spring semester and arrangements were made with teacher training institutions in the vicinity to articulate the Oakland offerings with the programs of these institutions. Summer conference staff members outlined their teaching plans for a month's study and these were approved by the summer session authorities in the neighboring institutions. When a selected group of 150 Oakland teachers were invited to participate in the 1945 summer conference they were assured that work carried on during the summer at the Oakland school administration building would be acceptable for credit in teacher-training institutions.

Due to the limitation of facilities and available space, each elementary school in the city was invited to send only one or two representatives according to the size of the school. These representatives were chosen by the school faculty and were encour-

aged to register with those responsible for the direction of the summer conference the problems which they and their faculties wished to have them study. In this way each elementary school representative to the summer conference became a liaison person between the school represented and the instructional staff of the conference. Since the instructional staff was composed of the regular supervisory and guidance personnel, the conference offered opportunity to articulate the summer activities with the general philosophy of the administration.

There were fewer offerings for secondary school teachers than for elementary school teachers and therefore not so many junior high school and senior high school teachers who might be in attendance. School counselors and occupational directors as well as curriculum assistants and teachers who had individual instructional problems of their own responded to the invitation to participate in the summer study. Due to the breadth of point of view of the secondary school teachers in attendance, there was little difficulty in fusing the interests of the teachers who were representatives of the two school levels of junior and senior high school. This was a factor of significance in the outcome of the conference.

The plan of organization of the month's study was that of an informal workshop. While a definite schedule was maintained and the participating groups had individual programs, the schedule was left sufficiently flexible for a steering committee to decide week by week upon additional inclusions or omissions in the regular program. Participants were organized into the following groups:

Elementary

- Section I—Art
- Section II—Elementary Assistants
- Section III—Guidance
- Section IV—Integrative Curriculum
- Section V—Reading

Secondary

- Section A—Curriculum
- Section B—Guidance
- Section C—Occupational Adjustment

General meetings were held on occasion with speakers on topics of interest to the entire group. Excursions likewise were conducted in which all interested teachers were invited to participate if time permitted. Social affairs also were arranged by a social committee for the relaxation and enjoyment of all in attendance.

As a result of the relaxing atmosphere during the month there developed within the Conference participants a feeling of *esprit de corps* which was encouraging to the staff. All the participants expressed with considerable enthusiasm their appreciation for the opportunity of becoming better acquainted with the supervisory and guidance personnel of the Oakland schools and of working co-operatively with them and with other teachers on problems of mutual interest and concern. Reports prepared by the several groups will be valuable assets in extending to other teachers within the city the thoughtful recommendations of the conference participants. Elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school teachers recommended that they have the opportunity of forming study groups within areas of the city for the purpose of cataloging the needs of children and making specific plans for meeting these needs. All aspects of the educational program of the city were in some way or other vivified by the penetrating interest and thoroughgoing, thoughtful recommendations of the several groups.

The summer conference proved itself a most valuable instrument in the in-service education of teachers. One hundred and fifty teachers, whose professional zeal and leadership have been strengthened by the experience of finding support in the thinking of other outstanding teachers and the summer conference staff, can have a positive and constructive influence on the general program for the school year. The aims of the supervisory and guidance staff can be extended through the understanding and intelligent contribution of teachers who participated in the summer conference.

As assistants in instruction, some twenty-five or thirty outstanding classroom teachers who have been selected to supplement, assist, and advise within the elementary schools, junior

high schools, and senior high schools next year will also augment the services of the supervisory and guidance staff members. They have been relieved of classroom instruction so that they may assist teachers and principals to meet the learning problems of children. These same teachers will gather in neighborhood councils to consider appropriate and articulated instructional aims for their respective schools for children of kindergarten through high school age.

The voluntary enrollment, attendance, and wholehearted participation of teachers in self-directing in-service education has a potency which is lacking in programs of exclusively administrative origin. These conditions prevailed during the Oakland summer conference and have set a precedent in stimulating teachers to purposeful study of their own teaching problems. The immediate help which practical and experienced teachers can render to the classroom teacher will complement and implement teachers' efforts to improve their teaching. It would seem, therefore, that the Oakland schools have better prospects this year for improved instruction because teachers have been given the impetus to a better understanding of children, their homes, and their living within the community.

In-service teacher education truly functions when teachers take part in the improvement of living and learning conditions. In-service education need not be education superimposed by one person upon another; for when teachers' problems are courageously and realistically faced jointly by teacher, supervisor, and superintendent it becomes education in which all responsible for the learning of children share profitably together. Every educator needs this experience for his own growth in co-operative living. To the extent that he shares with his associates and colleagues in co-operative activity, to that same extent is he capable of teaching children to enter into co-operative enterprises with others.

THE PLACE OF FINE ARTS IN OUR SCHOOLS

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It is the purpose of this article to discuss the place and meaning of the fine arts in our schools, emphasizing something of the practical nature of these subjects as well as their psychological effect upon the individual.

We have just passed through the most catastrophic war that the world has ever known, in which millions of men have bent all their energies toward learning how to fight and kill, while other millions have likewise bent all their energies to the preparation of the instruments of war. In such a period of history people are prone to forget the finer things of life, and to substitute for them the bare essentials.

We have been told by many leaders of our military forces that most of our American youth have demonstrated a power, and even a superiority, as human fighting units, on account of their ability to think quickly, to act with initiative, and to adapt themselves readily to changing conditions and to a great variety of requirements. This ability, which is in large measure an outcome of our educative processes, is a compliment to the general philosophy of the American public school.

When we study life in its varied aspects, from that representing the most primitive types to that of the most cultural, we should be able to detect a number of things in which there are fundamental values for the joys of living as well as for the bare essentials. (Note the policy of our military leaders, who took artists of all kinds, at tremendous expense, to any and all parts of the world, to the most distant and sordid places where men worked and fought. It was considered essential for the morale of these men that they see, hear, and enjoy the artistic ability of the best artists available. The feelings, emotions, and atti-

tudes of the men were of prime importance. When the fighting is over and the war is ended men by the thousands seek the shores of their native country and their homes. They want love, appreciation, the sunshine and the flowers; they want to take walks; they want to visit with people, to see shows, and to listen to music. They have been willing to fight—and to die if necessary—for that freedom of living which gives them an opportunity to appreciate the joys of an emotional life. Bare existence and bare necessity are not enough for a happy life. Someone has said that the world is as large for me as the number of things it holds which I can appreciate. (If, therefore, I would live abundantly, I must cultivate appreciation. I must know, I must understand, I must experience, to appreciate. One person will walk along the road or through a field and see little, and enjoy nothing, because he has not been taught to see the beauties—the color of the grass, the leaves, the streams, the sky, the rhythm in the shape and form of flowers, and the strength in trees, rocks, or the landscape. Another person walking the same path will be thrilled with beauties that he sees on all sides.)

(Since we must be *taught* to see and to hear and to understand beauty, we must not lose sight of the value of art education in our schools. Psychologically, one factor always confronts us; that factor is change. The war brings change; the post-war period will bring change. Always change and movement. In this process of change what can we as educators, who have so great a part in molding thoughts and attitudes, powers and skills . . . what can we do to make life richer and better? How shall we lead so that whatever direction the individual life takes it shall have in it all the beauty and harmony we are able to inspire? Surely the development and the use of the fine arts, which have always played so important a part in advancing civilization, will furnish us with one of the answers we seek.)

During the war, emphasis has been placed upon power and speed and material resources. This has also been an era marked by the greatest emotional stresses. It may be enlightening for us to compare the emphasis recently placed upon various types of learning with that of ten or twelve years ago. Has the emotional

development of the child been ignored in the stress of acquiring knowledge and skill? Has the mental attitude of the scientific explorer extended unduly into education involving other fields than science? I think we can say that, in secondary schools at least, there has been a strong swing of education in this direction.

If we take a long view of civilization, as we must, shall we not as educators insist that we concern ourselves always with the direction and the development of emotions and attitudes in children? An educated villain may be, by reason of that education, a more dangerous criminal. (Knowledge and information and skill do not make a good citizen. The way one uses his knowledge, his facts, and his skill is determined more by the emotions built into his personality than by the facts which he possesses intellectually. In other words, human behavior is determined more by the way we feel than by what we know.)

We sometimes hear fear condemned as being the great handicap of an individual, but fear in a directed and controlled sense is essential to life. How long could an individual live in modern, complex society without the development of the emotion of fear in some of its forms? Any person who has no fear will certainly soon be run over, in more ways than one. Also, what kind of a world would we soon have if there were no place for righteous anger? Life would be cold and dreary if there were not developed in individuals the sense of joy and appreciation of the finer things of life. The race would disappear if it were not for the emotion of love.

(When we give the matter any serious thought, we recognize that the deeper emotions of fear, anger, joy, love, etc. are basic in all useful behavior, as well as essential to biological survival. Therefore, emotions, strong feelings and attitudes are not to be discouraged, but on the contrary must be cultivated. If we look at the subjects in our curriculum we will find that music and art, dancing, pictures and dramatics play an important part in developing attitudes and in influencing behavior. These subjects have their place just as surely as do reading and arithmetic.)

We in the schools for many years have talked about the "whole" child—the development of the whole personality and

understanding the whole child. We have sometimes used the word "integration," by which we mean the working together of parts in an effective whole. We think of an integrated and effective personality, working with emotional control directed in accordance with the ideals of the society of which it is a part, as a "good" personality; we think of the possessor of such a personality as a good citizen. If we as teachers, therefore, fail to deal with the "whole" child, including the control of his emotions and the guidance of his desires, we may actually be destroying the potentialities of that child as a worthy citizen in a democracy. Should children in our schools, therefore, be trained chiefly in the scientific attitudes—to learn facts and to weigh values without emotional experiences? Or should not the schools devote a reasonable portion of time to the guidance of children into avenues of socially acceptable experiences and controlled emotions? The school must always be interested in the strength and in the direction of social and emotional attitudes that are developing in the lives of pupils.

It is not enough to say that emotions and attitudes have their place. They do not just spring into full blossom. They grow, they are developed, they are built up by experience. They must be just as much a part of a planned education as the other subjects of the curriculum. Some have had a mistaken notion that children want these subjects because they are easy. Children do not want things to do just because they are soft or easy. Have you not frequently heard children say, "Give me something hard to do"? The child—until he has been taught otherwise by adults—usually wants to do things that are altogether too hard for him to do.) Have you ever inquired of adults what subjects and what teachers they liked best in recalling their childhood experiences? Did they choose the easy teacher, and did they mention the soft or "snap" courses? Usually not. They look back with kindness upon the teacher who was hard and who made them work, provided that teacher was fair and possessed a reasonable understanding of the other fellow's rights. Most teachers have plenty of examples in which children have shown that they do not desire to do just as they please. Children like

to be directed into activities which constantly stretch their strength and their mental powers. They are happy when they have accomplished something which was hard, even too hard, for them to do. I am reminded of a child in one class, facing the daily period when there was no planned work to do, who said in an injured tone, "Teacher, do we have to do just anything we wish today?"

(There is also a value to most individuals in the release from stress produced by participation in one or more of the arts. We should be conscious of the value of art, music, literature, dramatics as an outlet of expression for the individual who is pent up and who is seeking an escape from something in his life which may be temporarily too hard for him to face.) All about us today, especially in the hospitals where veterans are gaining readjustment, is demonstrated the value of music and art and dramatics in bringing about a release of tension in the lives of people, in affording them development and actual joy. Thousands of veterans are spending hours of time in expression that is wholesome for them and often for others.

(There is a great field in which the arts may be used as developers of emotions, attitudes, and experiences in the life of the individual, leading him into the desired social pattern of our civilization. Should we not, then, provide for the children in our schools a training in emotional attitudes and expressions in keeping with our cultural pattern of life?) It will help our youth and our adults to maintain morale and to relieve tension. It will help them to identify themselves with cultural groups. It will help them to be sensitive to beauty. It will help them to a greater spirit of happiness within themselves, and a happier relationship with others. Most individuals will feel better because of such training. There are many who have sought and obtained help through these channels in serious periods of trouble. Others have found a place for themselves in cultural groups because they have been trained in music and art. To many has come a deep appreciation of the beauty in the stars and in the sky, in the flowers or in the woods. Looking at beauty in art or producing it . . . listening to beautiful music or producing it

. . . these are things that may affect the art of living, as well as the making of a living, for many of our people.

I think it altogether possible that our schools in the past may have over-emphasized the use of language. If you look at the work of our schools, you will find much activity in which pupils are judged by the way they speak, by the freedom or volume of speech, or by the way they write, by the way they can read or the way they can express themselves through the use of language. I do not condemn development of linguistic abilities nor deny the importance of their place in the curriculum, but urge that other aspects of expression be not ignored. Each of us can think of some acquaintance who has splendid ability in inventiveness, imagination, muscular skill, music, or art, who may at the same time have a great handicap in his ability to express himself, either orally or in writing. If we overemphasize linguistic ability and fail to recognize these other modes of expression we may frustrate or even destroy the contributions of those individuals who have other capacities but are handicapped in language.

(The wise teacher will seek to find what a child can do best; if possible, something in which he may excel a few, if not all, of those about him. This can then be used as a foundation for many another approach in leading the child into expressions of interest along other lines that may be more difficult for him. The wise teacher will attempt to discover special capacity and to encourage it. The world needs people with a wide variety of interests.)

The fine arts have a basic place in all schools and in the education of all pupils. Not only is education in the fine arts important for the sake of the arts themselves, but they are the means through which opportunity for development may be afforded for most pupils in aesthetic experiences, in emotions, and in attitudes, and in building up a personality through such emotions and attitudes. Such personality becomes fused with the character of the child and enables him to fit into the pattern of social life which we believe in, and live for, and are willing to fight for. The fine arts are a necessary part of every school curriculum that is to educate children into broad and effective citizenship in a democracy.

THE OBLIGATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO AID OLDER TEACHERS IN THE USE OF NEWER METHODS AND MATERIALS

SISTER MARY PATRICIA, *Director of Teacher Training, Immaculate
Heart College, Los Angeles*

Who are the "older teachers"? It is not length of years that makes a teacher old. Rather, it is a heart robbed of its allotment of sympathy, of understanding of childhood, of the ability to see and appreciate the feelings and the point of view of the child. No matter how many or how few her years, the teacher is old who has forgotten how to see from the eye-level of the child, or how to joy or grieve with children. The teacher is young, in spite of years, who possesses the gift of spontaneous enthusiasm; who can become excited over things old to her but new to childhood; who has never lost with the years the element of surprise and interest to keep things new and shiny in her eyes as they are in the eyes of children. No—it is not years that age a teacher.

The young teacher is alert, open-minded, and eager to learn. The older teacher is more often complacently satisfied and content with the endless dullness of the three R's. She fails to appreciate the interrelations of life-interests and school subjects. She lacks the initiative to embellish learning, thus to make it a happier, simpler, more challenging experience for children.

But there *are* older teachers. How can they be aided to see and to find in newer methods and materials the help and interest and purposefulness that will make for better teaching and happier learning?

The school administrator has an obligation to provide the means or the motivation to keep his staff learning. This obligation is eminently pertinent today in view of the adjustments that have had to be made to meet the demand for teachers in both

rural and urban districts. For example, the existence of the emergency credential and the return to the field of so many out-of-service teachers are two such adjustments that imply the need for guidance techniques and aids.¹

Books. The administrator should provide professional books for the use of the teachers, books that will benefit the children through the teachers.

Magazines. Current professional periodicals should be at the disposal of the teachers. These might be discussed at faculty meetings and reports made on pertinent articles.

Reading. The administrator should plan the teacher's schedule to afford opportunity and motivation for professional reading.

Tests. The administrator should provide new standard tests and direct the teachers in their use, the most important phase of which is the analysis of the results.

Friendliness. It is the administrator's responsibility to provide such an atmosphere of friendliness that the teachers feel prompted to disclose and to discuss their basic problems without fearing any reaction of blame.

Outside Stimulation. New interest and enthusiasm, new ideas and techniques might be brought in by outside speakers, consultants, or demonstrators.

Democracy. The teachers should be permitted a democratic share in administration. This develops a responsibility that makes for greater interest.

Curriculum. The administrator ought frequently to encourage the teachers to re-examine and to discuss the curriculum, and to check the extent to which its courses are meeting present-day needs of children.

¹ R. H. Simpson, "Are Your Teachers Learning?" *School Executive*, LXI (December, 1941), p. 16-18.

Community Surveys. The school is not really meeting the needs of the community unless the teaching staff is cognizant of the problems of the community. It is the administrator's duty to lead the staff in a periodic survey of the community.

Materials. Teachers should be encouraged to take an active part in the selection of materials.

Summer School. It should be made professionally and, if possible, financially worth while for teachers to attend summer school.

Conventions. Teachers should be encouraged to attend and to participate in professional conventions.

Awareness. Teachers should be made aware of the free materials that can be obtained upon request from various sources. They are usually advertised in professional magazines.

These are some of the plans proposed for keeping teachers from getting into a mental rut. They will serve, too, to foster a healthy exchange of ideas which may reinforce the teacher by new vision, new enthusiasm, and new ideas.

Specific demonstrations may be planned by making use of one or several or a combination of the following devices:

1. Visual Aids
 - a. Moving pictures
 - b. Slides
 - c. Pictures
 - d. Graphs
2. Demonstrations
 - a. Showing how to use
a new book
a new method
new aids
 - b. Showing how to present
different subjects
different type lessons

- c. Showing how to correlate various content subjects traditional subject-matter with the activity program
- d. Showing how to initiate an activity, a project, or unit
- e. Showing how to motivate the children's interests

Demonstration is a "direct method" and the busy or inexperienced teacher has often found it a short-cut to more interesting days in the classroom.

The following demonstrations (here briefly narrated) are suggestive and typical of the kind that is practical and possible to provide for stimulus in a guidance program.

LESSON ON COTTON

(This demonstration lesson was given to fourth grade children. The observers were a mixed group of teachers.)

At the beginning of the class the teacher called attention to the "bouquet" she had on her desk. (It was cotton.) She told the children that it had been sent to her from Fresno by a little boy whose father owned acres and acres of cotton. Then she handed the cotton to the children. This started lively discussion. Many of the children had never seen cotton; most of those who had seen it as they drove along the highway had never touched it. They all touched it, pulled it apart, found the seeds, etc. Then the questions began. The teacher answered no questions that the children could answer. After interesting discussion, mounted pictures borrowed from the Los Angeles Public Library were shown. Then they were placed along the blackboard ledge by a child and all the children went around the room examining the pictures at close range, asking for explanations of what they did not understand, and re-examining the pictures they liked best.

After they were seated again the teacher asked them what new things they had learned. As the children enumerated them the teacher listed them on the board. (Incidentally, a lesson on good citizenship was injected here when everyone attempted to talk at once.)

The listing of new things learned brought out words that were new to the children. Some of these were discussed by the class, and the spelling noted.

Then the teacher reminded the children that this cotton had come from Fresno. She asked if they knew where else cotton was grown. The geography books were passed around and soon the attention of the class was absorbed in "reading to find" answers to questions that were listed on a chart the teacher had hung on the wall in the front of the room. These questions had been prepared previously by the teacher and were leading questions based upon important facts in the lesson on "Cotton Growing in the South."

Before the end of the lesson the teacher called attention to the pictures again by asking some of the children to find the pictures that showed a specified fact or phase of cotton growing. The lesson was brought to a close after three or four of the children had chosen the "picture they liked best of all" and explained to the class why they liked it. At the teacher's suggestion the children decided what facts about cotton and cotton growing "we must all remember."

The reaction of those observing this lesson was surprise that the children had learned so much from the pictures and class discussion before they looked at the book. And, secondly, they expressed surprise that the pictures correlated so well with the book lesson. The point was made that cotton growing is cotton growing in books or pictures, and to children it is much more pleasant to learn about it in pictures or with pictures.

LETTER WRITING

(This lesson was observed by in-service teachers "old" and "young." It was on the sixth grade level)

The teacher began the lesson by reading to the children a letter from a child who had moved to Florida. There followed a rather lively discussion concerning items of interest in the letter. Gradually, by remarks and questions, the teacher directed the discussion to letter writing in general. They discussed the

fun of receiving and sending letters and the different kinds of letters. Finally they came to the question of good form. There followed further discussion of neatness, handwriting, correct form, etc. The class examined sample addresses, headings, salutations, and closings, which were shown in different English books and work books which were available to the children.

At the end of the discussion on the correctness of "how to write a letter," the teacher suggested that each child write a real letter to mail. The teacher's manner of making the suggestion made the "writing of a real letter" seem the most delightful thing in the world to do.

While the teacher walked about directing or giving help where it was needed, the children wrote pencil drafts of their letters. All the letters had some purpose. Some of them were addressed: (1) to the Chamber of Commerce to find out some interesting thing about the city; (2) to a local pet shop to find out how to care for a pet; (3) to different companies asking for samples (perfume, soap, etc.); (4) to a lumber yard asking for prices and suggestions about the best kind of wood to use for a project in which the class was interested; (5) to travel agencies asking for catalogs.

One child wrote to the President asking the correct way to pronounce his name. There had been a previous difference of opinion in this regard. (Two weeks later that child received an official letter from the White House with the President's name marked diacritically and a few little personal comments added that thrilled the children, and gave prestige to the child who wrote the letter.)

When all the letters were written correctly they were recopied in ink, placed in envelopes properly addressed by each child, and taken home to be stamped and mailed.

Good form in letter writing was learned and made immediately purposeful by application. A real letter written to be mailed is much more stimulating for the child than the mere writing correctly of names, addresses, and headings.

Slides and films are always an interesting aid to the teacher and a learning-stimulus to the child. The following sound films

and silent picture films have been used successfully in the science program.¹ The sound films are complete in themselves in that there is instruction throughout the showing of the film. In most of them there is an effective musical background.

Swampland—(animal life)

Desert Land—(animal life)

Forest Gangsters—(mountain lions)

Bushland Revels—(birds)

A Trip to the Sky—(solar system)

Romance in a Pond—(fish and water insects)

Underground Farmers—(ants)

Trail of the Lonesome Pine—(primitive America)

The Big Ditch—(Panama Canal)

Living Jewels—(under-sea life)

Strange Courtship—(garden spider)

Seed Time—(methods of seed dispersal)

Wild Flowers in California

The teacher should prepare the children for a showing of such pictures. They should have some information about the topic beforehand, so that they will get the most from the picture. If the children see the picture with no preparation, it will be so new that they will miss some points of interest or of importance.

In carrying on a demonstration lesson the teacher must take care not to "put on a show." The lesson must be practical in every way for the ordinary classroom situation, and should naturally evoke the interest or arouse the response of the children. The object of "demonstrating" for the older teacher is to show her the practical possibilities in the use of certain methods or materials, and the added interest for the child in the correlation of subject matter and subject interests.

¹ These pictures are available at the Ideal Pictures Corporation in Los Angeles.

TAKING THE BOOK TO THE YOUNGSTER IN VENTURA COUNTY

ELIZABETH R. TOPPING, *Librarian, Ventura County Free Library*

"The library truck!" The class half rises in their seats to catch a glimpse of a Ford truck that drives slowly into the school grounds. It is not a very large school. The children come out in an orderly fashion and break into a run at the foot of the steps.

"Did you bring my copy of *Black Beauty*?" a boy calls.

"Yes, José, let me get it for you."

The librarian, a woman who knows her books and has selected and packed them with this school in mind, smiles and speaks a word to a small girl who has not yet taken out a book. She helps her choose one and shows her where to write her name.

When the children have settled down to examining the books and there is a lull, the librarian confers with the teachers. "Here are the readers. Yes, these are the visual aids, and here is *Mother Goose*, and the transportation material." One of the teachers drafts a big boy to carry the projector into the classroom. Then she says, "We are having a P.T.A. meeting next week on Friday afternoon and would like an exhibit of books on training little children between two and four. The mothers want to join the study class and a district chairman is coming out to teach them. She speaks Spanish. Have you any books on embroidery?"

"Please," pipes up Maria, "What do you call this flower?" Then follows a lesson in the use of *Wild Flowers of California*.

The children, each with a book, return to the schoolroom and the truck moves on to its next stopping place.

What is the difference between this service and that of installing regular classroom libraries in the schoolrooms?

To begin with, we do not get this well worn complaint, "Why don't you get some new books? I've read all of those." Anyone skilled in handling books and children would speedily

find that the child had not read all the books, that there were still delightfully unexplored possibilities. But they don't seem new.

The books on the truck are changed each time it goes out, and are chosen with a consideration of the tastes of the children at that school and their ability to read. There is something exciting about this, like opening a package, something different in going outdoors to get your books, some change in meeting the librarians. The result is that by actual observation and report it has been found that children who have never before read a book through, do read the books that they get from the truck, that they make use of books on subjects in which they have a natural interest. An example of this can be reported in the case of a family that moved into one of our valleys recently. This family had never lived in California before. The children and parents wanted to know about a book that would describe piñon trees, manzanita, and the different kinds of sage. There happened to be books on the truck that answered this awakened curiosity. The family was delighted to obtain this reading matter.

The actual mobile physical setup of the truck helps to encourage reading. It goes from school to school and like the peddler of old it carries news, such as,

"Yes, the children at Oliveland's liked *East of the Moon and West of the Sun*."

"We are going to display some drawings from Mound School in the children's room of the main library."

"Here are some of the books described at the institute Saturday."

"This film was shown at Briggs Friday and the teachers have asked to see it again because the children got so much out of it."

"We gave out a dozen reading certificates at Conejo."

"This book was discussed on the school radio Thursday."

The book truck not only carries news but it brings contact between the county library and schools. Each school in the county is reached at least once in three weeks, many every two weeks and some once a week, according to size and distance and

need. This means the possibility of getting material without writing or going to Ventura and the opportunity of talking it over with some one who has assembled it and can explain its use or get other material if needed to meet the demand.

The field of elementary education is not the only one crossed by this orbit of the book truck. One of the most satisfying of the trips it makes is that to the Rancho Sespe, a large ranch employing Mexican nationals, where many Spanish-speaking children get books. Newcomers from Oklahoma, Missouri, and other states also live there and are served by the book truck. It arrives about five o'clock and gives out books and periodicals to the men, women, and children. A noticeable preference of the Mexicans is for the classics—Dante, Shakespeare and Cervantes. The newspaper *P.M.*, the *London Illustrated News*, and other picture newspapers and weeklies are in demand. Many read only Spanish so we send magazines in Spanish for young and old.

At another book-truck station are two Filipino families. The remainder of the patrons are from Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. The Filipino children, who have always attended California schools, are far ahead of their fellow students in reading ability. We have been supplying them with books from our book truck for years. The other children show avid interest in the books from the truck and we can almost see them grow in their appreciation of reading matter to which they have not before had access.

The work of the book truck in the county has brought about a closer relation between school and library, and it has done away with the duplication of many books in classroom libraries. Book truck service makes it less necessary for schools to retain in classroom and central libraries any large collections of books that are not in active use.

Bringing the books to children in a free and easy outdoor atmosphere seems to induce many to examine books and then to read them through. It is also a convenient means of shipping visual aids, visiting branch libraries, consulting with librarians, and delivering books. Not least in results is the pleasant relationship that has grown up between the people who man the truck and those whom they serve.

THE PROMOTION AND PLACEMENT OF PUPILS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LIONEL DE SILVA, *Director of Educational Research,
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It is the rare modern school which has completely escaped the imprint of traditional concepts regarding the promotion or nonpromotion of pupils. Even today, connotations of reward or achievement still cling to the idea of promotion while punishment, failure, or lack of achievement are associated with nonpromotion. In many a modern school a child still approaches the end of the year asking himself "Will I pass?"

Educational leaders have often found it difficult to eliminate the vestiges of these traditional connotations from their thinking. As a result there have at times been somewhat meaningless controversies over the so-called "failure or nonfailure" programs with their implications of reward or punishment.

Closer analysis reveals that promotion or nonpromotion is an administration-guidance function in which the pupil is placed in the environment which is most conducive to his learning. It is the result of professional judgment as to what grade placement is in the best interest of the pupil, and not as to whether or not he should be rewarded or penalized.

When this positive point of view is accepted, placement standards rather than promotion standards are operating. These are not minimum hurdles which all children or even the average child must meet. Neither can they be substituted for curriculum goals, which shape the course of study, although in certain aspects they may be congruent. Curriculum goals are far more specific and detailed than are placement standards. The attempt to use them as placement standards in all of their specificity makes them meaningless in the placement process. In addition they vary from teacher to teacher. No one can prescribe the

values which are operative in the classroom since these are necessarily the teacher's own values. Finally, curriculum goals are subject to continuous modification as new experiences broaden and deepen the views held by teachers and administrators.

FACTORS CONSIDERED IN PLACEMENT

Placement standards, on the other hand, are factors which experience has proved to be of compelling importance in deciding which placement will be most favorable to the growth of the pupil in relation to other pupils with whom he will associate and to the probable curriculum they together will pursue. Experience in many school systems has indicated that the determination of the most favorable learning environment for a given child requires the consideration of several significant factors. Among these are the following:

1. *Chronological age.* School law in California and in most states makes age a factor to be considered, inasmuch as it is the basis by which children are permitted to enter school. It is also a convenient yardstick by which children may be compared with others with whom they will associate.

2. *Experiential background.* The experiences which a child has undergone should receive consideration when he is being placed. Experience in formal education is generally necessary for successful adjustment with others although at times extremely rich or extremely meager out-of-school experiences may be factors bearing on a child's placement.

3. *Physical maturity.* It has long been obvious that a child's physical status is of importance in his association with others. Extremes of physical development are often of deep significance and may have lasting effects upon the personality of a child if he is improperly placed.

4. *Social maturity.* The nature of a child's interaction with his group is significant in determining his placement. Indeed, it often is the most influential factor since the school is concerned with the child as a member of a group and not as an isolated individual.

5. *Emotional maturity.* The level at which a pupil meets new situations and new problems and the degree of control in his reaction to displeasing or frustrating situations are also important factors in determining a child's placement.

6. *Competence in the communicative skills.* Every child must be able to contribute ideas to and receive ideas from members in his group if he is to grow educationally. This means that he must have at least minimum competence in the communicative skills of speaking, reading, and writing. It also implies the necessity for some degree of homogeneity in the group so that the interchange of ideas by means of the spoken and written word will make its maximum contribution to pupil growth.

7. *Requirements of state law where pertinent.* There still are requirements of state law which must be considered regardless of whether or not they retain certain vestiges of the connotations of achievement or failure. Such an example is the requirement that all eighth-grade pupils must pass an examination on the Constitution of the United States. This and other legal requirements must be considered whether we like it or no.

APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

Although grade placement may be made at any time in the child's school life, experience has indicated that it is educationally desirable and administratively convenient to make a more careful analysis of a pupil's placement at particular periods in his school experience. In general these are turning points when more marked changes are present in the nature of children and in the educational program they will pursue. Standards of placement are the specifics of the most significant factors which influence the decision on pupil placement, applicable to these particular points of time.

These points of time vary in accordance with the organization of the school system. In the traditional eight-year elementary school, they are just before placement in the fourth, seventh, and ninth grades. In a system having a junior high

school organization, they are before placement in the fourth and seventh grades. At times it is considered desirable to make this more careful analysis when a child is about to enter the first grade in order to anticipate pupil placement problems which will arise because of the endowment of the child.

It is appropriate to remind ourselves that placement standards are not definitive and separate. There is no precise determination of when a particular standard is so significant that it overbalances another, for the standards are so related and interwoven that the application of one will have effects on another. Their separation and classification on paper is only for the purpose of making them more definite and useful in application and as a guide to clear and objective thinking in making placement decisions.

Accordingly, the pupil must be considered as an organic whole—as a person and not as discrete and unrelated data. All the evidence bearing on the problem of determining his best placement must be weighed and the best professional judgment exercised.

Any change in the child's normal progress through school is so important that it may have effects upon him for years and perhaps for life. For this reason, the responsibility for any change should not be borne by one person, but should be shared by those who know him best and who are well informed on the alternatives available. Usually this should be done in a pupil placement conference in which the principal, teacher, and others who have access to the facts together consider them carefully. The use of a form on which pertinent data are recorded is helpful in such a conference. It is suggested that the form provide for the following items: chronological age, experiential background, physical maturity, social maturity, emotional maturity, competence in the communicative skills.

It should also be remembered that placement standards are not only the concern of teachers at the terminal points of the growth level. All teachers in each of the growth levels should be thoroughly familiar with at least those standards which will be applied at the terminal point of the level in which they serve.

This is necessary if the best interests of the pupil are to be served; and it is also important in preparing the parents to bear their share of the responsibility of providing the most favorable emotional environment, particularly when an additional year of elementary school is indicated.

Pupil placement is a professional function which can be exercised by trained persons who know a particular child and the alternative placements which are available for him. Since the information concerning a child's interactions in his school environment and the alternative placements are not easily available to parents, they can not be expected to make the best judgments regarding the most favorable grade placement for a child. However, their attitudes toward his placement are pertinent insofar as they affect his emotional adjustment. The final decision, therefore, is one which is made in the best interest of the pupil by professional people who consider all of the pertinent facts.

SUGGESTED STANDARDS

Standards of placement are not universal absolutes which apply in all situations. The educational environment in which a child is placed is indeed one of the most significant considerations, and since this environment varies from school to school and from district to district in accordance with the philosophy which shapes the curriculum, these standards will necessarily also vary. Accordingly, the standards given below for one grade level are presented without any claim to finality, simply as examples of those that have proved effective in a particular situation for placement in one level.

STANDARDS FOR PLACEMENT IN THE FOURTH GRADE ¹

CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

A child should be between eight and one-half and ten and one-half years of age when placed in the fourth grade. A child who will be less than eight and one-half years of age as of September 1 of the next school year and who has had less than three years of experience in school, should not be placed in the fourth grade unless such a recommendation

¹ Tentative Standards for Pupil Placement, Inglewood City Elementary School District, Inglewood, California, 1945.

is made as a result of a special guidance case study. A child who will be ten and one-half years of age as of September 1 of the next school year, and who has had four years of experience in the primary grades should be placed in the fourth grade unless a special guidance study has been made and recommended a fifth year in the primary grades.

If a pupil will be less than nine years of age as of September 1 of the following school year, and is markedly below average in academic aptitude, an additional year in the primary grades may be desirable if other factors also indicate this.

EXPERIENTIAL BACKGROUND

Before being placed in the fourth grade a pupil should have had experience in school to the extent of seventy-five per cent of each of three school years.

PHYSICAL MATURITY

When placed in the fourth grade a child should have sound (or corrected) vision and hearing and sufficient energy output for work in that grade. A pupil may be placed in the fourth grade when his height and weight are so atypical that placement in another grade would cause maladjustments either to himself or to the group. Similarly, physical handicaps which may cause further maladjustments to the child or to other members of the group shall be considered as factors in determining suitable placement.

SOCIAL MATURITY

A pupil should take part in group activities, sharing responsibilities, materials, and experiences. He should accept and uphold rules made by the group, or issued by constituted authorities. He should maintain work habits acceptable for his age level. He should make contributions to the group at a level which warrants placing him in a more mature group.

EMOTIONAL MATURITY

A pupil should give evidence of growth in adjusting calmly to situations even if they are distasteful, disappointing, or exciting. He should face problems and take constructive criticism within his comprehension without resentment. He should like most other children in the group, and feel that he is of some importance in the group.

COMPETENCE IN THE COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

Speaking. The pupil should have the ability to tell his personal experiences to the group with acceptable clarity and to take a reasonably active part in group discussions. Marked speech defects, particularly those defects related to oral inaccuracy such as lipping or letter substitu-

tion which may be symptoms of social immaturity, may at times be of enough significance when combined with other factors to indicate that an additional year of experience in the primary grades is desirable.

Reading. In general, the pupil should be able to read in conformity with his expectancy unless he is a guidance pupil. The average pupil should have a grade placement of 4.0 on an acceptable standardized reading test or as evidenced by the ability to read with understanding such books as *Far Away Ports*, *Enchanting Stories*, *If I Were Going*, or *Near and Far*.¹ A child who is seriously deficient in reading as evidenced by the inability to read with understanding such books as *Good Stories* or *Round About You*² should be carefully studied to determine whether this deficiency, in combination with others, is of sufficient significance to indicate need for an additional year of experience in the primary grades.

Writing. The pupil should be able to do needed written work, legibly and with some speed, using the cursive form. He should be able to spell most of the words he needs in his written work.

CONCLUSION

As has been indicated above, standards could similarly be developed for other grade levels. As a matter of fact, there are probably no reasons other than limitations of time and effort why such standards should not be developed for each grade level. This would serve to effect a re-determination of the best environment for a pupil at the end of each year instead of every few years.

However, even when this is done, caution should prevent acceptance of such standards as authoritative and final. They inherently carry no more authority for application than do the factors considered in a diagnosis by a physician. The inherent nature of placement standards limits them to serving only as guides toward sound judgments concerning a pupil's environment.

¹ Gertrude Hildreth and Others, *Far Away Ports* (Third Reader, Level One), Easy Growth in Reading Series. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1940.

Gertrude Hildreth and Others, *Enchanting Stories* (Third Reader, Level Two), Easy Growth in Reading Series. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1940.

Mabel O'Donnell and Alice Carey, *If I Were Going* (Third Reader), The Reading Foundation Series. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Co., 1941.

Nila Banton Smith, *Near and Far* (Third Reader), The Unit-Activity Reading Series (California State Series Edition). Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1938.

² Gertrude Hildreth and Others, *Good Stories* (First Reader, Level Two), Easy Growth in Reading Series. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1940.

Nila Banton Smith, *Round About You* (Second Reader), The Unit-Activity Reading Series (California State Series Edition). Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1938.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REED COLLEGE CONFERENCE ON CONSERVATION EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At the call of the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, a conference of educators representing the four states of Oregon, Idaho, California, and Washington was held at Reed College, Portland, Oregon, June 5-7, 1945. The objective of the conference was to encourage and facilitate inclusion of soil and water conservation in the courses of study in the schools and colleges of America.

The Committee on Conservation in the Elementary Schools¹ introduced its report by commending with deep appreciation the work of the Soil Conservation Service. The representatives of this federal service at the Reed College conference indicated a comprehensive recognition of the function of education in creating the popular understanding essential to a sound national program for the protection and wise use of our basic natural resources. To implement this belief, the Soil Conservation Service has produced material of technical excellence and service to schools which has stimulated nation-wide interest in conservation. The recommendations of the committee were presented in the spirit of furthering a program which is in effective operation at the present time and has progressed far beyond the initial difficult stages.

It was recognized that these recommendations to the Soil Conservation Service and to professional educators in the field of elementary education comprehend a long-term program of co-op-

¹ The Committee on Conservation in the Elementary Schools consisted of the following persons: Francis L. Drag, Assistant County Superintendent of Schools, San Diego County, California; Clark Frasier, Director of Laboratory School, Eastern Washington College of Education, Cheney, Washington; Helen Heffernan, Chief of Division of Elementary Education, California State Department of Education, Sacramento; Leila Lavin, Director of Elementary School Curriculum, Spokane, Washington; Blanche Pennick, County Superintendent of Schools, Gray's Harbor County, Montesano, Washington; N. J. Rice, County Superintendent of Schools, Weiser, Idaho; Melvin C. Wilson, Principal, Rigler School, Portland, Oregon; Walt A. Long, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Portland, Oregon, *Chairman*.

erative relationships. Refinements in the recommendations will be made as experience indicates. The recommendations of the committee follow.

1. All areas of experience explored in the elementary school should be carefully examined by curriculum workers to discover opportunities for the development of significant concepts related to conservation. Separate curriculum units on conservation should be developed for use in the middle and upper grades of the elementary schools.

The differentiation between the conservation education program in rural and urban schools lies in the direct or indirect utilization of the environment. Both rural and urban children should have basic experiences related to conservation.

2. Textbooks supplemented by many small, well-illustrated monographs, by maps, visual material and the like may provide valuable content for conservation education, but the experiences of children should not be limited to the reading of text material alone.

It is recommended that a source volume containing simply-written factual material on all aspects of conservation be prepared by the Soil Conservation Service and other co-operating government agencies as a reservoir of authoritative material.

Workshops, local institutes, summer session groups, committees of teachers should develop teaching units applicable in their local situations. Experts from governmental agencies should participate as resource consultants. Such units should contain descriptions of environments, firsthand and vicarious experiences, experiments, bibliography, and visual aids.

3. A. A definite need exists for a series of books on conservation which can be read by children and young people. In order to produce satisfactory material a collaboration should be arranged utilizing the technical resources of the Soil Conservation Service and professional educational writers. The Soil Conservation Service should undertake immediate steps to implement this recommendation.
- B. It is suggested that brief highly-selected bibliographies be prepared rather than more extensive and comprehensive bibliographies; such bibliographies should be furnished to school libraries, county libraries, and curriculum laboratories for availability to teachers when needed.

- C. The Soil Conservation Service should collect materials produced by state or regional groups, make careful evaluations of the same and make the materials available to other teachers.

If an authoritative source volume can be prepared, independent writers will have available desirable content for inclusion in material for children. The Soil Conservation Service should make contact with all publishers of school textbooks recommending the preparation of suitable materials.

- D. Local problems of soil and water conservation should be utilized as the experiential basis of all curriculum units. Conservation problems of other areas should be developed through contrast and comparison with the local situation. Teaching units can suggest means of initiating activities.

- E. Simple visual aids such as flat pictures, maps, charts, and posters are most widely useful. It is recommended that clear photographs with descriptive nontechnical captions be prepared in sets for classroom use. Sets of Kodachrome slides and/or film strips should be prepared on specific subjects and made available at cost to schools. It is recommended that the problem of filing such material as large posters be considered. These are frequently wasted because they are difficult to file.

Motion pictures are valuable in giving an over-all impression for arousing enthusiasm or for summary. For the elementary school, the flat picture and still materials are well suited to the needs of young children. The committee recommends that the Soil Conservation Service undertake the preparation of a series of radio broadcasts from which transcriptions could be made. Technically-trained personnel of the Soil Conservation Service should prepare highly dramatic scripts.

4. A. Teaching material can best be prepared as a result of the co-operative efforts of teacher groups utilizing the resources of teacher education institutions and government agencies.
- B. A program of public education should be consistently carried on by the Soil Conservation Service to create readiness for the educational program of the schools.
5. A. Special training is essential for competence. Educators should recognize the importance of conservation to our national welfare and prosperity. They must have the opportunity for firsthand experience in conservation education. There is a need for state-wide leadership in planning in-service teacher education pro-

grams to assist teachers in becoming competent in the field of conservation education.

- B. The Soil Conservation Service should establish a series of operation institutes for teachers and school administrators.

(1) Purposes

- (a) To acquaint teachers and school administrators with the organization, purposes, and activities of the Soil Conservation Service
- (b) To develop an understanding of relationships between the Soil Conservation Service and the public schools
- (c) To familiarize the teachers with the services and materials of Soil Conservation Service available to the schools

(2) Sponsorship

Each institute to be sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service in co-operation with state departments of education, colleges, universities, and city and county school systems

(3) Length

One or two days

(4) Number of participants

The number of participants to be limited to transportation facilities furnished by Soil Conservation Service for field trips (perhaps 50)

(5) Suggested program

- (a) "The Purpose of the Institute," plans for the day, et cetera (to be explained by Education Consultant of the Soil Conservation Service)
- (b) "Soil Conservation Service Administrative Organization on National, State, Local Basis" (to be described by Regional Conservator or State Conservationist)
- (c) "The Soil Conservation District" (discussed by District Conservationist)
 - 1. Utilization
 - 2. Land Use Capabilities
 - 3. Farm Planning(These topics are merely suggestions. Charts, graphs, printed materials and demonstrations to be used by each speaker as needed)
- (d) Lunch
- (e) Field Trip
- (f) Discussion Period

- (g) "Education and Soil Conservation" (by Education Consultant)
- (h) Dinner—outstanding Soil Conservation Service speaker; possibly an illustrated lecture.

6. Responsibilities of Co-operating Groups

- A. It is recommended that the Soil Conservation Service make contact with presidents of teacher training institutions and offer its services and facilities for the development of plans for preservice education of teachers. Conferences with members of the faculties of science, social studies, and education departments would be fruitful in establishing effective preservice education.
- B. It is recommended that the Soil Conservation Service offer its services and facilities to state departments of education, universities and colleges, and city and county school systems for the development and promotion of in-service summer workshops. These should be arranged by Soil Conservation Service to develop teacher background and curriculum units adaptable to the local environment.

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